Remarks Honoring the Women's World Cup Soccer Champions *January* 23, 1992

Well, a thousand apologies for keeping such a distinguished group waiting. And thank all of you for coming here to the White House. First, may I single out the Acting Secretary of Commerce, Rock Schnabel, down here, and John Keller, the Under Secretary for Travel and Tourism. Coach Dorrance, the coach is over here, the guiding light of the women's national soccer team, and congratulations.

J.B. Marine, the U.S. Youth Soccer Association champions, are they out there? Way back there. All right. Hold up your hands. Let's see you. How about the Potomac School Panthers; I want these champs to look you over and see the competition coming up. [Laughter] They're the Independent School League division champs. Georgetown Visitation's team, anybody here from them? Right back there. They are DC's Independent Schools League champs. The Special Olympics Virginia champs, right over here.

Let me just say that it's great to join you in honoring a group of women who reflect a favorite American pastime; it's known as winning. [Laughter] Leave it to an American team to win the first FIFA world championship—world championship, I emphasize. And leave it to an American women's team to win our first world soccer championship ever. And that is a marvelous accomplishment. And someone once said that "sport was the first great separator of the sexes." For the sake of the male ego, I hope the men start catching up. [Laughter]

I've done a little bit of research on this gang, and it may take a while to describe the terrific lineup. But I'm told of your exploits. Of Michelle Akers-Stahl—where's Michelle? Right down there—winner of the Golden Boot Award. That has all kind of connotations for those of us in politics—[laughter]—but having been a former soccer player, I imagine it says something about her excellence and her commitment. She scored the winning goal, showing what Hemingway so clearly described as "grace under pressure." And then there's Carla Werden and Debbie Belkin and Lori Henry

and Joy Biefeld—where are they now? There are some of them. They gave a new meaning to the term "U.S. defense." Next, "Crazy Legs"—[laughter]—I hope she owns up to it. Does she? There is such a person—[laughter]—"Crazy Legs" Karen Jennings on offense. Julie Foudy, right here, who was found studying biology before the winning game, frogs' legs and all that kind of thing, but what a game. And finally, here's to Tracey Bates. Where's Tracey? I think she's the real reason why Arnold Schwarzenegger said he couldn't make it today. The coach calls her the "tiny terminator."

But look, for each of you, winning this cup capped a long road of sweat and sacrifice and determination. First the qualifying tournament in Haiti, where I hear you ran circles around the competition, 49 goals in 5 games. Then you trekked to China for that grueling championship tournament. I was told that many of you weren't used to some of those more exotic Chinese delicacies that Barbara and I encountered when we lived there for a year and a half—[laughter]—duck feet, snakes, all of this kind of thing. These wise guys invented their own slogan, "Come to China; we take off weight." [Laughter]

But then for the matches in the championship, you took on tough opposition: Edging Sweden, 3 to 2; upsetting Germany—maybe you didn't think it was an upset; sportswriters played it as that—5 to 2. You beat the injuries; you beat the odds. And then on November 30th, you proved yourselves again, ousting Norway for the World Cup. No wonder Michelle Akers-Stahl said, "This team never gives up." You showed how America can outscore, outfight, and outcompete any nation we're up against.

That kind of spirit made you champions. The American spirit is proud, not arrogant, confident, determined, and victorious. I remember the day when America's athletic excellence was limited to perhaps baseball and football in the eyes of the world. Well, today, Americans are taking over every-

where from sumo to soccer. And as proof of just how far soccer has come in this country, the U.S. will proudly host the 1994 World Cup championship.

So, let me just say to today's champions, world champions: Your victory is an inspiration, no matter what sport. Your victory is an inspiration to all our athletes, male and female, young and old. And thank you for winning one for America. You've made us all very, very proud.

I get accused in my job of having perhaps too keen an interest in sports. Well, too bad. [Laughter] I think it does a lot for the real spirit of this country. And certainly this team has made a contribution to the real spirit of this country. You've made us very, very proud. So, bless you all, and thanks for being with us today.

Note: The President spoke at 2:42 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Anson Dorrance, coach of the U.S. National Women's Soccer Team, and the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA).

Remarks to the Young Astronaut Council and a Teleconference With the Crew of Space Shuttle *Discovery January 24*, 1992

The President. Thank you all very much. Please be seated, and thanks for that warm welcome. The Vice President and I are just delighted to be with you. And of course, I might say I'm so proud of the leadership that the Vice President is giving in this allout effort to support the space program, strengthen it, build on it. And this is a great day.

Let me say to Wendell Butler, the CEO of Young Astronauts, that we appreciate all your good work. I am also so proud that Dick Truly is here, Admiral Dick Truly, the first astronaut to serve as Administrator of NASA. All told, well, you've seen them, there are 23 veteran astronauts here today. And I'm told this is one of the largest gatherings of space explorers ever at the White House.

Our thoughts also are with seven other astronauts who right now are orbiting the Earth in a space shuttle mission. We're proud of all these men and women. They take risks; they do it with great courage, and they do it with great determination and dedication.

I'm also glad to see so many boys and girls here, from kindergarten through ninth, in this Young Astronauts program. And as President, I've set a goal that involves you young people, and my goal is for young Americans like you who are in grade school

right now to travel to Mars someday. New travels in space will give us answers to some of the things that children wonder about. I might add, many adults who contemplate our great universe wonder about these same things, too.

The other day I heard what one 5-year-old wonders about. One of my staff members asked his 5-year-old kid if we should build new spaceships and send people to the Moon again. And the kid said, "Yes, of course, we should." His father said, "Well, why? Why should we send them to the Moon?" He said, "That's easy," the kid said. "It's to see if there's any Martians there." [Laughter]

Well, we can chuckle about that, but the kid got it about right. As most of you young astronauts know, we've challenged America to go back to the Moon to stay, and then onward to Mars. And sending people back to the Moon for more experience in an environment different from ours is the first step on the journey to explore the gigantic rift valleys and mountains of Mars.

When we break through barriers of the unknown we not only help ourselves, we learn a lot more about ourselves. And when we reach our goal of sending men and women to Mars, we can find out the answer